

027 means for receiving a request from an order destination member site to access said order specification so as to respond to said order specification based on the requested information from said open business information database to initiate a transaction between said member site and said order destination member site.

REMARKS

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current Amendment. The attached is captioned **"Version with markings to show changes made"**.

The present application amends claims 13-16. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 13-16.

Claims 13-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Midorikawa (U.S. Patent No. 5,655,088) in view of Popolo (U.S. Patent No. 5,715,402). This rejection is traversed for the following reasons. Applicants submit that the features of the present invention as now recited in claims 13-16 are not taught or suggested by Midorikawa or Popolo whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Amendments were made to the claims so as to clarify various features of the present invention. Particularly, amendments were made to the claims to more clearly recite a method and apparatus for conducting electronic business transactions in an electronic business transaction system having a plurality of

member sites, a center site and a network which connects the member and center sites to each other.

According to the present invention open business information of open businesses issued by a plurality of member sites to find business partners is stored in an open business information database included in the center site. The open business information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by the member sites. In the center site a request from a member site to access open businesses stored in information of the open business information database is received. Thereafter, an order specification from the member site is received at the center site. The order specification represents an order by the member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information. The order specification is then transmitted from the center site to an order destination member site based on the requested information from the open business information database so as to initiate a transaction between the member site and the order destination member site.

The above described features of the present invention now more clearly recited in claims 13-16 are not taught or suggested by Midorikawa or Popolo whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Midorikawa teaches an electronic market transaction system for matching processing between information on transaction orders placed by order side customers and information on transaction orders placed by hit site customers so as

to establish transactions between the customers. Midorikawa teaches additional apparatus so as to increase the probability of the establishment of transactions between customers.

Specifically, Midorikawa discloses in Fig. 1 thereof that when an order side customer places a transaction order through a dealing terminal, the market information (rate information) of the order is notified to hit side customers through the dealing terminal. When in response to the notification there is a request for a hit of the transaction order from a hit side customer, an electronic matching processing is executed so as to compare the terms of the transaction of the order and the terms of the transaction of the hit request.

Midorikawa teaches that when it is judged by the above described comparison that the terms of transactions of both the order hit side customers (price of transaction and amount of transaction) match, the corresponding order and hit side customer agreements are compared. If it is judged that the agreements match indicating that each party is able to do business with the other, the credit lines for the parties are then compared and the transaction is established if the credit lines match.

The present invention as now more clearly recited in the claims differs substantially from that taught by Midorikawa. Particularly, the present invention teaches the storage, in an open business information database included in a center site, of information of open businesses issued by a plurality of member sites to find business partners. According to the present invention, the information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by the member sites.

As is clear from Fig. 1 of Midorikawa there is no teaching or suggestion of a open business information database in the dealing terminal as in the present invention. The dealing terminal merely contains a function for comparing (matching process) market information from order and hit side customers so as to determine whether a transaction can be conducted between the order and hit side customers. Thus, there is no teaching or suggestion in Midorikawa that, for example, the order or the hit side customer accesses a database in the dealing terminal so as to obtain information regarding open businesses available to the order or the hit side customer as in the present invention.

Therefore, Midorikawa fails to teach or suggest storing, in an open business information database included in the center site, information of open businesses issued by a plurality of member sites to find business partners, wherein the information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by the member sites as recited in the claims.

Further, since there is no teaching or suggestion in Midorikawa of a database for storing information of open businesses in the dealing terminal, it follows that there is no teaching or suggestion in Midorikawa of receiving a request from a member site to access the information of open businesses of the open business information database stored in the center site as in the present invention.

Therefore, Midorikawa fails to teach or suggest receiving, in the center site, a request from a member site to access the information of open businesses of the open business information database stored in the center site as recited in the claims.

Still further, according to the present invention, once the member site has received the requested information, the center site receives from the member site an order specification representing an order by the member to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information. In Midorikawa market information is transmitted by the order and hit side customers to the dealing terminal. There is no teaching or suggestion in Midorikawa of the receiving at the dealing terminal from the order or hit side customer, an order specification as in the present invention.

Therefore, Midorikawa fails to teach or suggest receiving, at the center site, an order specification from the member site, wherein the order specification represents an order by the member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information as recited in the claims.

Still further yet according to the present invention, upon receipt at the center site of the order specification from the member site, the order specification is transmitted to the order destination member site described in the requested information so as to initiate a transaction between the member site and the order destination member site.

Therefore, Midorikawa fails to teach or suggest transmitting, from the center site to an order destination member site, the order specification based on the requested information from the open business information database to initiate a transaction between the member site and the order destination member site as recited in the claims.

As is clear from the above, the features of the present invention as now recited in claims 13-16 are not taught or suggested by Midorikawa. The above noted deficiencies of Midorikawa are not supplied by any of the other references of record particularly Popolo. Therefore, the combination of Midorikawa and Popolo fails to teach or suggest the features of the present invention as now recited in the claims.

In the Office Action the Examiner recognizes that Midorikawa does not disclose a database. The Examiner attempts to rely on Popolo for an alleged teaching of a database.

Popolo teaches a system in which sellers post detailed specifications of an item for sale and buyers are allowed or search the posted inventory. According to Popolo a detailed specification of the item for sale is stored in a database and the buyer is permitted access to the database so as to select anyone of the items for purchase.

The above described teachings of Popolo are not equivalent to the features of the present invention as recited in the claims. Particularly, the present invention provides a center site which not only stores information of open businesses from the member sites but also mediates between the seller site and the purchase site so that a transaction can be conducted between the seller and purchase sites. Such features are clearly not taught or suggested by Popolo.

Particularly, Popolo fails to teach or suggest receiving, at the center site, an order specification from the member site, wherein the order specification represents an order by the member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information as recited in the claims.

Further, Popolo fails to teach or suggest transmitting, from the center site to an order destination member site, the order specification based on the requested information from the open business information database to initiate a transaction between the member site and the order destination member site as recited in the claims.

Thus, as is clear from the above, Popolo suffers from the same deficiencies relative to the features of the present invention as recited in the claims as Midorikawa. Accordingly, combining the teachings of Midorikawa with Popolo still fails to teach or suggest the features of the present invention as recited in the claims. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the above described rejection of claims 13-16 under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Midorikawa and Popolo is respectfully requested.

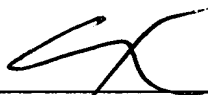
The remaining references of record have been studied. Applicants submit that they do not supply any of the deficiencies noted above with respect to the references utilized in the rejection of claims 13-16.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 13-16 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 13-16 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (500.36167CX1).

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 13-16 as follows:

13. (Twice Amended) A method of achieving electronic business transactions in an electronic business transaction system including a plurality of member sites, a center site, and a network to connect the member sites and the center site to each other, said method comprising:

storing, in an open business information database included in said center site, information of open businesses issued by a plurality of member sites to find business partners ~~in an open business information database in said center site~~ said information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by said member sites;

receiving, in said center site, a request from a member site to access ~~contents~~ said information of open businesses of said open business information database ~~stored in said center site;~~ and

receiving, at said center site, an order specification from said member ~~site at said center site,~~ said order specification representing an order by said member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information; and

transmitting, from said center site to an order destination member site, ~~said order specification to an order destination member site based on contents of the requested information from said open business information database to initiate a transaction between said member site and said order destination member site.~~

14. (Twice Amended) An electronic business transaction system, comprising:

- a center site;
- a plurality of member sites; and
- a network which connects said center site and said member sites to each other,

wherein said center site comprises:

an open business information database which stores information of open businesses issued by said member sites to find business partners, said information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by said member sites,

means for receiving a request from a member site to access ~~contents~~ information of open businesses of said open business information database, and

means for receiving an order specification from said member site, said order specification representing an order by said member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information, and

means for transmitting, from said center site to an order destination member site, ~~said order specification to an order destination member site~~ based on ~~contents of the requested information from~~ said open business information database to initiate a transaction between said member site and said order destination member site.

15. (Amended) A method of achieving electronic business transactions in an electronic business transaction system including a plurality of member sites, a center site, and a network to connect the member sites and the center site to each other, said method comprising:

storing, in an open business information database included in said center site, information of open businesses issued by a plurality of member sites to find business partners ~~in an open business information database in said center site,~~ said information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by said member sites;

receiving, in said center site, a request from a member site to access ~~contents~~ information of open businesses of said open business information database stored in said center site;

receiving, at said center site, an order specification from said member site ~~at said center site,~~ said order specification representing an order by said member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information; and

receiving, at said center site, a request from an order destination member site to access said order specification ~~at said center site~~ so as to respond to said order specification based on ~~contents of~~ said open business information database ~~stored in said center site~~ to initiate a transaction between said member site and said order destination member site.

16. (Amended) An electronic business transaction system, comprising:
a center site;

a plurality of member sites; and

a network which connects said center site and said member sites to each other,

wherein said center site comprises:

an open business information database which stores information of open businesses issued by said member sites to find business partners, said information of open businesses describes products and/or services desired to be purchased or being offered for purchase by said member sites,

means for receiving a request from a member site to access ~~contents~~ information of open businesses of said open business information database, and

means for receiving an order specification from said member site, said order specification representing an order by said member site to sell or purchase goods and/or services described by the requested information ~~at said center site,~~ and

means for receiving a request from an order destination member site to access said order specification ~~at said center site~~ so as to respond to said order specification based on the requested information from ~~contents of~~ said open business information database ~~stored in said center site~~ to initiate a transaction between said member site and said order destination member site.